

Plans to introduce legislation next week to give schools nationwide

the option of providing suppers.

(Washington, DC)— Congresswoman Gwen Moore (D-Wisc.) will take the House floor this afternoon to champion a provision that would allow Wisconsin “At Risk” After School Care Programs to serve supper to their youth participants through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Currently, CACFP reimburses after school care programs for serving one snack each day in areas where at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for free or reduced price meals, based on school data. However, in 10 states, after school programs are allowed to provide actual suppers to children 18 and under.

The provision that Congresswoman Moore has fought for would make Wisconsin eligible to provide suppers to kids in “at risk” after school programs.

“Providing nutritious meals to kids is one of the most effective ways we can put them on a path to success,” Congresswoman Moore said. “For all the focus we put on education reform, we should not forget that our children cannot be expected to concentrate on their homework on an empty stomach. I want Wisconsin’s children to know that they will be able to eat every day, so they can spend their energy on other pursuits, like school work, team sports, volunteering, or after school jobs.”

In Wisconsin, more than 63,000 individuals participate in CACFP daily, and more than 35 million meals were consumed in Wisconsin through CACFP last year. A survey conducted by the Milwaukee Hunger Task Force last year determined that granting a waiver allowing Wisconsin to serve supper through the “At Risk” After School Care Program has the potential to feed an additional 1,600 children daily.

The Senate Subcommittee on Agriculture Appropriations included the Wisconsin provision in its version of the fiscal year 2010 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration Appropriations Act. Congresswoman Moore will rise today to encourage the House Appropriations Committee support the waiver allowing Wisconsin to serve supper through “At

Risk" After School Programs, and to thank Senator Herb Kohl (D-Wisc.) for his hard work to secure the provision in the Senate bill.

"Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee has recognized the increasing nutrition needs among our member families and have worked hard in partnership with Milwaukee Public Schools to expand our meal program at Bethune School as well as 21 other central city Boys & Girls Club locations," said Jim Clark, President of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee. "However, the majority of our enrolled children aged 13 and higher still need a third meal, and we are excited about—and strongly support — any and all efforts by our federal policymakers to provide suppers to all children 18 and under."

Congresswoman Moore also today sent a letter to the House Appropriations Committee Chairman David Obey (D-Wisc.), and the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) – as well as their Ranking Members Jerry Lewis and Jack Kingston – urging them to support the Wisconsin waiver when the 2010 Agriculture Appropriations Act goes to conference between the House and Senate.

"Now that we are facing a recession, all signs point to an epidemic of hunger, among children and adults alike, unlike any we have seen for decades," the letter states.

"The Child and Adult Care Food Program plays a crucial role in establishing healthy eating and physical activity habits that last a lifetime," the letter continues. "Granting at-risk youth in Wisconsin the option of being served a third meal would provide them with a healthy dinner and afford them the opportunity to enhance their academic achievement at the same time, successfully supporting the link between learning and nutrition."

Each day, 3.1 million children nationwide receive nutritious meals and snacks through the Child and Adult Care Food Program. In addition to after school programs, centers and day care homes are eligible to serve up to two reimbursable meals (breakfast, lunch or supper), or two snacks and one meal, to each eligible participant each day. The program also provides meals and snacks to 108,000 adults who receive care in nonresidential adult day care centers, as well as children in emergency shelters.

New legislation forthcoming

In addition to strongly supporting the provision in the fiscal year 2010 Agriculture Appropriations Act, Congresswoman Moore plans to introduce legislation next week that would not only expand the CACFP, but also the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act. The bill adds the option of offering supper to what is offered under the National School Lunch Act. It would also authorize ALL states to serve supper through the CACFP.

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